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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/868,554	09/14/2001	Taro Imagawa	20088.1300	1530
20322	7590	03/07/2005	EXAMINER	
SNELL & WILMER ONE ARIZONA CENTER 400 EAST VAN BUREN PHOENIX, AZ 850040001			DESIRE, GREGORY M	
ATTY UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		2625

DATE MAILED: 03/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/868,554	IMAGAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Gregory M. Desire	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 September 2001.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3,7,8,10-13 and 15-21 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 4-6,9 and 14 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 14 September 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-3, 7-8, 10-13 and 15-21 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (5,825,926) in view of Katsuyama et al (5,625,710).

Regarding claims 1, 8, 12, 13, 16-21 Tanaka discloses,

Wherein the first character element string includes a first character element (note fig. 11 block 1a) and second character element string includes a second character element (note fig. 11 block 1b), and

A similarity between the first character element and the second character element is predetermined between the first character element and the second character element (note col. 7 lines 1-2, an output of similar character patterns),

However, Takana is silent disclosing similarity between elements as distance. Katsuyama discloses having a degree of similarity being defined as a distance (note col. 14 lines 20-35). Therefore it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to define similarity as distance in the system of Tanaka. Reducing processing time, would have been a highly desirable feature in the character retrieval art due to its efficiency and Katsuyama recognizes

reducing processing time would be expected when degrees of similarity is defined as distance in the system of Tanaka.

Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses, comparing the distance with a first predetermined reference distance (note Katsuyama, fig. 22 block 814, threshold, examiner interprets as predetermined distance),

Determining whether the second character element matches the first character element based on a result comparison with the first predetermined reference distance (note Katsuyama, col. 16 lines 5-15, the examiner interprets comparison obtained resulting as recognized character as first and second character as matching).

As to claim 8, 17 and 20,

Specific character element of the plurality of character elements (string), character elements at a plurality of locations having the possibility of being concatenated with the specific character element are predetermined (note Tanaka col. 4 lines 18-25, examiner interpret retrieving character string from prepared dictionary shows the grouping of a string being predetermined).

Regarding claim 2 Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses,

Wherein for the first character element, a reliability of character recognition is determined based on the reliability (note Katsuyama, fig. 22a, recognition reliability is calculated based on character codes).

Regarding claim 3 Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses,

Wherein the predetermined first referenced distance is determined base on user input (note Katsuyama col. 6 lines 17-20, threshold is from software input by programmer, may be a user).

Regarding claim 7 Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses,

Wherein the distance has a probabilistic distribution (note, Katsuyama col. 14 lines 9-28, examiner interprets degree of similarity as reciprocal number of a distance as probabilistic distribution).

Regarding claims 10 and 11 Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses,

Wherein the specific character element is located at an end of a row or column, the plurality of character elements having the possibility of being concatenated with the specific character element are each located at a head of row or column (Tanaka col. 4 lines 15-30, examiner interprets a string has possibility of being group with specific character located a the head of row or column).

Regarding claim 15 Tanaka and Katsuyama discloses,

Dividing the second character element string into a plurality of character element portions (note Tanaka col. 4 lines 35-12, examiner interprets character code data as plurality of character elements).

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 4-6, 9 and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
4. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Regarding claim 4, the prior fails to further distinct changing first reference distance to second reference distance, comparing the distance with second distance and determining whether second character element matches the first character element, this in combination with other limitation is not taught in the prior art.

Regarding claims 5, 9 and 14, the prior art fails to teach selecting of distance from a plurality of distances. This in combination with other limitation is not taught. Claim 6 depends on claim 5. Therefore also objected.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gregory M. Desire whose telephone number is (703) 308-9586. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:30-6:00) Second Monday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bhavesh Mehta can be reached on (703) 308-5246. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Gregory M. Desire
Examiner
Art Unit 2625

G.D.
February 28, 2005



BHAVESH M. MEHTA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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